

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Upper Allen Township Firefighter's Relief Association Cumberland County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2019

April 2020



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Ronald Dean, President
Upper Allen Township Firefighter's
Relief Association
Cumberland County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Upper Allen Township Firefighter's Relief Association (relief association) pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and mandated by the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010 (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2019.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report.
2. To determine if the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above and was not required to be and was not conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the relief association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures, including the safeguarding of assets. Relief association officers are responsible for complying with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2019:

- The relief association did not take appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report, as detailed below and discussed in the Status of Prior Finding section of this report.
- The relief association, in all significant respects, complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed later in this report.

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Unauthorized Expenditure

The supplementary financial information contained in this report is presented for purposes of additional disclosure and analysis. We performed only limited procedures on the supplementary financial information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association and, where appropriate, their response has been included in the report. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

April 1, 2020



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010, (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, the Department of the Auditor General's duty is to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association to determine that funds received under the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution Law, Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.* (commonly referred to as Act 205), are properly expended.

The relief association is a charitable organization that was formed primarily to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals to participate in volunteer fire service.

Act 118 governs the overall operation of volunteer firefighters' relief associations. Relief association bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which relief associations conduct business. To fulfill its primary purpose, Act 118 authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by Act 118, it is the responsibility of relief associations to choose investments in a proper and prudent manner.

Volunteer firefighters' relief associations receive public tax monies, and the association officers therefore have a responsibility to the public to conduct the association's financial affairs in a businesslike manner and to maintain sufficient financial records to support the propriety of all association transactions. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are also responsible for ensuring that the association operates in accordance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Act 205 sets forth the computation of the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution paid to each applicable municipality throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The amount of the distribution is based upon the population of each municipality and the market value of real estate within the municipality. Upon receipt of this distribution, the municipality must allocate the funds to the volunteer firefighters' relief association of the fire service organization or fire service organizations that is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

The relief association was allocated state aid from the following municipality:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Upper Allen Township	Cumberland	\$124,205	\$114,100	\$126,410

The volunteer firefighters' relief association and the affiliated fire service organization are separate, legal entities. The relief association is affiliated with the following fire service organization:

Upper Allen Township Fire Department

UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The relief association has not complied with the following prior audit finding. This finding is noted below and discussed in detail in the Finding and Recommendation section of this report:

- Unauthorized Expenditure

Although the relief association received reimbursement of \$842 from the affiliated fire company for the unauthorized expenditures that were made in the prior audit period, the relief association again expended funds in the current audit period that were not authorized by Act 118 as further disclosed in the finding of this report.

UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Noncompliance With Prior Audit Recommendation – Unauthorized Expenditure

Condition: As disclosed in the Status of Prior Finding section of this report, although the relief association received reimbursement from the affiliated fire company for the unauthorized expenditures that were made in the prior audit period, the relief association again expended funds during the current audit period that were not authorized by Act 118. The relief association expended \$450 for training for grant writing during the current audit period that is not authorized by Act 118.

Criteria: Section 7416(f) of Act 118 states:

The funds of any volunteer firefighters' relief association may be spent:

- (10) To pay reasonable expenses actually and necessarily incurred for attending bona fide firefighters' training schools.
- (11) To purchase safeguards for preserving life, health and safety of volunteer firefighters to ensure their availability to participate in the volunteer fire service.

Costs associated with training for grant writing do not qualify as an authorized volunteer firefighters' relief association expenditure; consequently, this disbursement is not authorized under Act 118.

Cause: Relief association officials indicated that they were unaware that the expenditure for training for grant writing was not authorized by Act 118.

Effect: As a result of this improper expenditure, relief association funds were not available for investment purposes or to pay for expenditures authorized by Act 118.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association be reimbursed \$450 for the unauthorized expenditure and that relief association officials become familiar with Section 7416(f) of Act 118 to aid them in determining the propriety of future expenditures. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (Continued)

Management's Response: Relief association management agreed with the finding as presented at the audit exit conference and, as a result of our audit, the affiliated fire company reimbursed the relief association \$450 for the unauthorized expenditure on January 28, 2020.

Auditor's Conclusion: We reviewed documentation verifying that the reimbursement of \$450 was received. Compliance for expenditures made during the next audit period will be subject to verification through our next audit.

UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
CASH AND INVESTMENT BALANCES
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2019

Cash	\$ 173,558
Investments	<u>48,897</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u>\$ 222,455</u>

UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2019

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$ 73,761
Relief benefits	393
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	<u>755</u>
Total Benefit Services	<u>\$ 74,909</u>

Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$ 216,207
Equipment maintenance	88,724
Training expenses	56,893
Fire prevention materials	<u>16,680</u>
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 378,504</u>

Administrative Services:

Other administrative expenses	\$ 2,176
Bond premiums	<u>776</u>
Total Administrative Services	<u>\$ 2,952</u>

Other Expenditures:

Undocumented expenditure	<u>\$ 450</u>
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Total Expenditures	<u><u>\$ 456,815</u></u>
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UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP FIREFIGHTER'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Upper Allen Township Firefighter's Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Ronald Dean
President

Mr. Peter Arcait
Vice President

Ms. Reagan Shumberger
Secretary

Ms. Virginia Kise
Treasurer

A report was also distributed to the following municipality, which allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association:

Mr. Louis Fazekas
Secretary
Upper Allen Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.